

# EPA Tribal Wetlands Virtual Workshops 2021 Wetland Program Development Grants

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NATIONAL WPDG COORDINATOR

# WPDG - Background

- ▶ Established in 1990 with \$1M STAG; FY17 appropriation: \$14.4M; President's FY18 Budget Request \$10.2M.
- ▶ Funded bi-annually (every other year) through competitive process.
- ▶ CWA 104(b)(3) authorized activities.
  - ▶ research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies.
  - ▶ No implementation.
- ▶ Requires a 25% match unless placed in a PPG then as low as 5% (or lower).
- ▶ Goal of the program is to build state, tribal, and (to a lesser extent) local wetland programs.
- ▶ Grants can be one to four years.
- ▶ We have funded 51 states and territories, 70+ tribes (not including intertribal organizations), and many local governments.
- ▶ Information on the WPDGs can be found at: <https://www.epa.gov/wetlands/wetland-program-development-grants> .

# WPDG – Requests for Applications

Three separate competition processes:

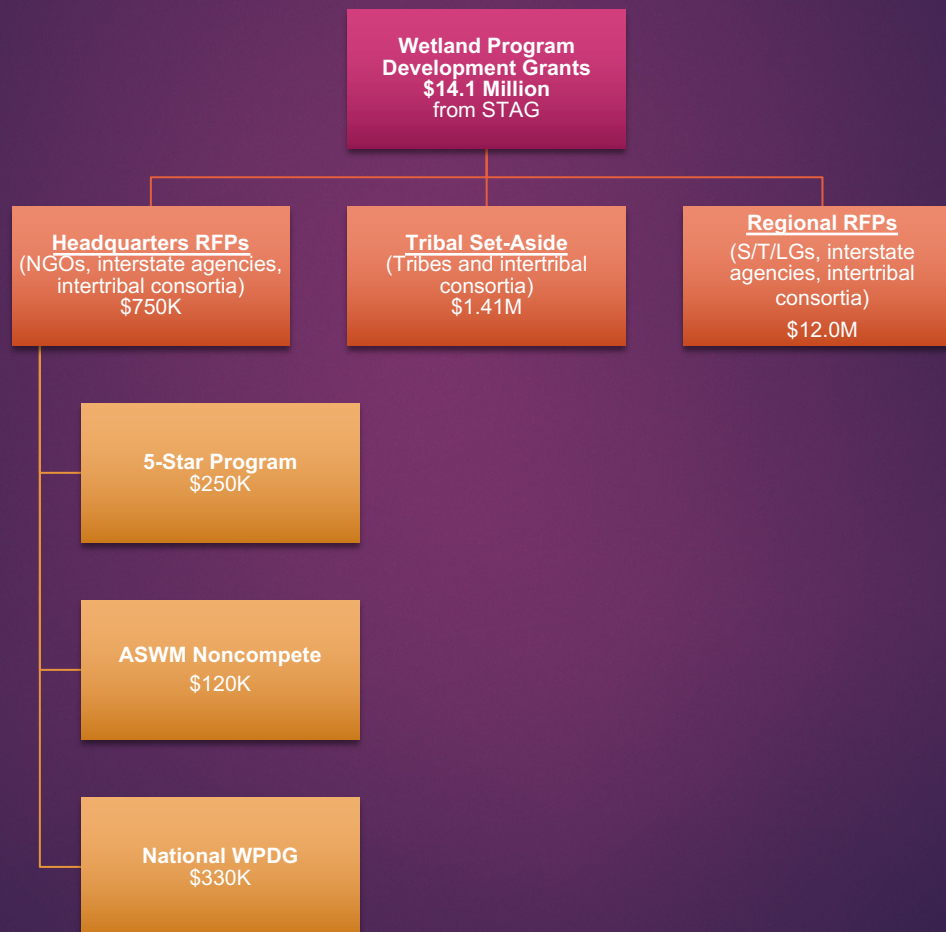
1. Regional RFAs (CFDA 66.462)
  - ▶ Ten individual RFAs based on the same template for states and tribes, interstate agencies, and intertribal consortia.
  - ▶ Held on the odd fiscal years.
2. National Tribal RFA (CFDA 66.462)
  - ▶ Nationally developed RFA for tribes and intertribal consortia.
  - ▶ Held on the even fiscal years.
3. National RFA (CFDA 66.461)
  - ▶ RFA developed at HQs for non-profit NGOs, interstate agencies, and intertribal consortia.
  - ▶ Held on the even fiscal years.

# WPDG – Requests for Applications

- ▶ Regional and National Tribal RFPs have two tracks
  - ▶ Track 1 – States and/or Tribes with an approved Wetland Program Plan (WPP) and are carrying out projects described in the WPP or are developing/refining a WPP.
  - ▶ Track 2 – States and/or Tribes without a WPP or all other applicants.
- ▶ Each application can only be submitted under one of the two tracks but not both.
- ▶ An eligible applicant can submit one or more applications.
- ▶ The length of the grant and the amount is determined by the applicant but can not be longer than 4 years or larger than the ceiling listed in the RFA.



# WPDG Budget Outline FY 2021



# Wetland Program Development Grants (WPDGs)

- ▶ To be eligible under this grant program all proposals must support the development or refinement of state/tribal/local government wetland programs.
  
- ▶ RFA priorities are program building activities from Core Elements of a Wetlands Program:
  - Regulation.
  - Monitoring.
  - Restoration and Protection.
  - Water Quality Standards for Wetlands.
  
- ▶ Each of these four core elements is comprised of several broad “actions” that if collectively carried out would complete that core element.
  
- ▶ In addition, each action is made up of several more specific “activities,” which are the actual steps a state/tribal/local government could carry out to achieve each action.
  
- ▶ The four core elements, the set of development or refinement activities and the specific actions under the four core elements that are eligible under each RFA are listed at <https://www.epa.gov/wetlands/wetland-program-development-grants-eligible-activities>.

## What are Wetland Program Plans?

- ▶ “Charter” the course of a state’s/tribe’s program development and refinement actions.
- ▶ Establishing a goal or goals for the next 3-5 years.
- ▶ Set out steps (actions/activities) to reach those goals.
- ▶ Set out a timeline of when those actions/activities will take place.

# Why Are Wetland Program Plans Important?

- ▶ Wetland Program Plans (WPPs) assist states/tribes with program development by encouraging them to think strategically about what they are going to do over a period of several years to build their wetlands program.
- ▶ WPPs allow EPA to be clear on where the state/tribe intends to go, and how it plans to get there.
- ▶ WPPs allow EPA to more effectively provide useful technical assistance.
- ▶ WPPs allow local governments and universities to potentially help the states/tribes build their wetlands programs.

# WPP Example

- ▶ Goal
  - ▶ The overall goal of the tribal wetlands program is to quantify, assess, protect and conserve wetlands on and near the Reservation and to assign appropriate management practices.
  - ▶ Ultimately, the Tribe's Wetlands program aims to achieve a level of "no net-loss" of wetlands and an improvement in wetland quality and quantity in the watersheds in which the reservation lies.



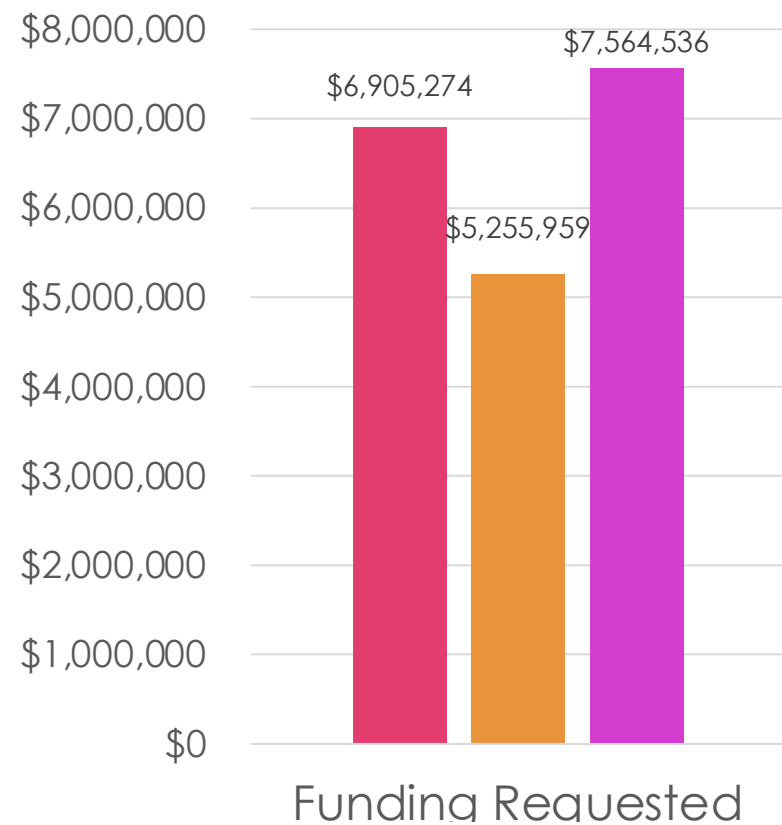
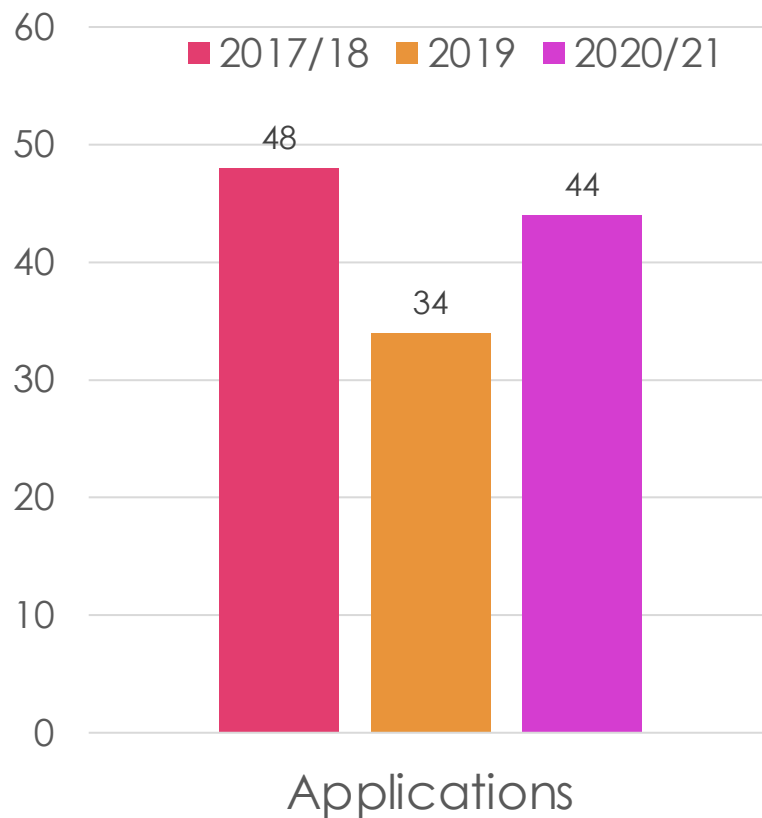
# Actions/Activities Example:

- ▶ **Core Element: Monitoring and Assessment**
- ▶ **Goal: Develop a monitoring and assessment strategy consistent with Elements of a State Water Monitoring and Assessment Program for Wetlands.**
- ▶ **I. Define wetlands and assessment objectives and strategies.**
- ▶ ***Actions:***
- ▶ **Timeframe: 2022-2025**
- ▶ A. Document wetlands monitoring strategy and identify monitoring objectives.
- ▶ ***Activities supporting Actions:***
  - ▶ This activity was begun and initially completed in 2019 and 2021, this work focused on determining the extent of culturally significant plants. In addition, the strategy began with EPA Level 1 and 2 Assessments using rapid assessment approaches for sites selected for evaluation. [COMPLETED]
  - ▶ 2022-2024 wetlands monitoring strategy and identify monitoring objectives will continue to be developed.
  - ▶ In the future, Level 3 assessments will be considered for integration into wetlands monitoring and assessment as funding allows.

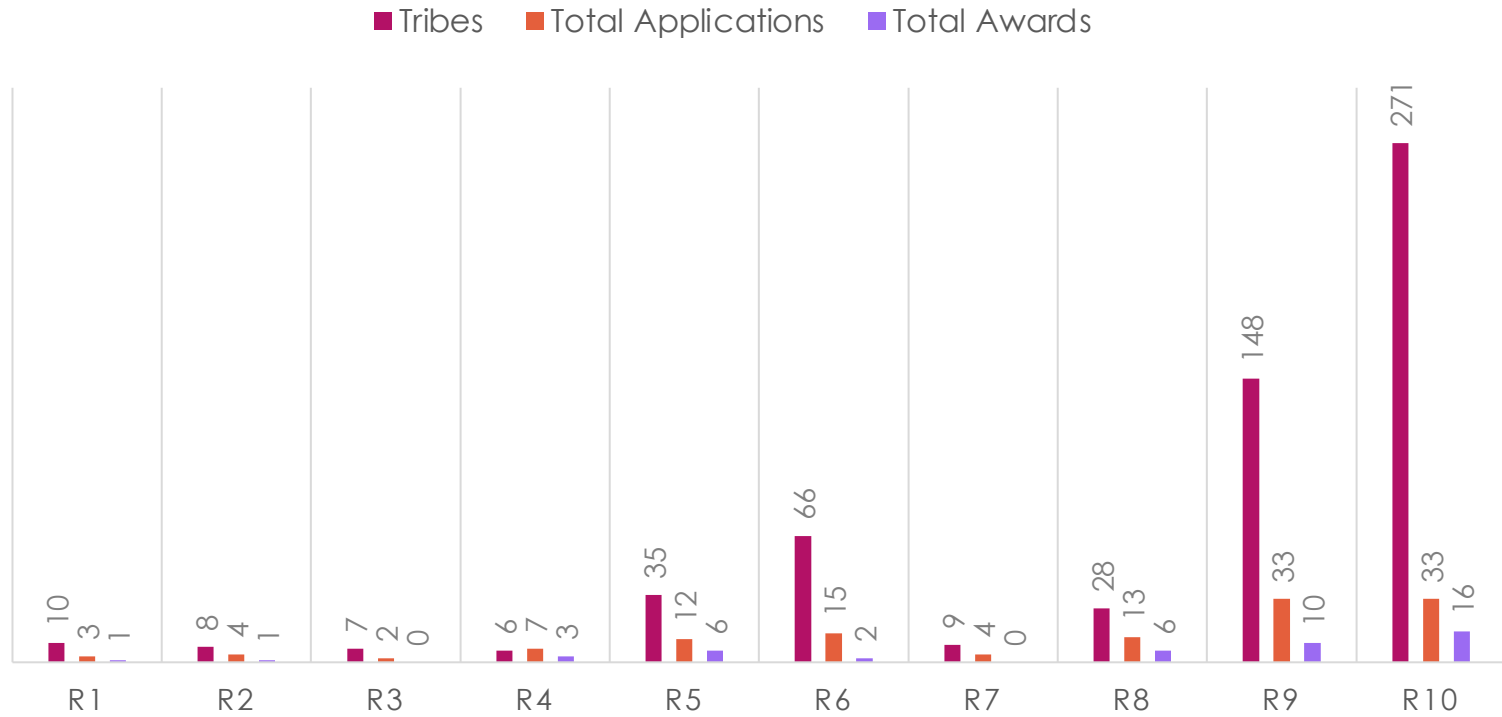
# Actions/Activities Example:

- ▶ **Timeframe: 2022**
- ▶ B. Continue to define data needs and uses.
- ▶ ***Activities supporting Actions:***
  - ▶ Some data needs of the program were identified including the basic data needed for proper management of wetlands such as extent and location. This data need was partially met in 2020. Data need determinations will continue through 2025 and beyond as wetland mapping within more USGS topographic quads are mapped and field-verified.
  - ▶ The Tribal Environmental program and partners will review incoming data.

# National Tribal WPDG - Summary



# National Tribal WPDG Summary – Grants by Region



# National Tribal WPDG Summary

- ▶ 75% of the applications were in Track 1 and 25% in Track 2.
- ▶ 40% of applications were from tribes that had never submitted a WPDG proposal or had not received a WPDG in 10 years and 60% were from tribes that currently had a WPDG or had a grant in the last 5 years. .
- ▶ 2017 – 17 awards for \$2.6M
- ▶ 2019 – 9 awards for \$1.38M
- ▶ 2020 – 19 awards for \$3M
- ▶ 71% of the awards were made from Track 1 and 29% from Track 2.



## Lessons Learned and Next Steps:

- ▶ Next National Tribal WPDG RFP scheduled for Winter of 2021-2022 for FY22-23 funds.
- ▶ Some changes to the RFA.
- ▶ Selections in March or April 2022 and awards summer 2022.
- ▶ What would help you to prepare and submit an application?

# Other Funding Resources for your Wetlands Program

- ▶ Indian Environmental General Assistance Program (GAP)
  - ▶ The GAP was initiated in 1993 to provide grants to tribal governments and intertribal consortia to build capacity to administer environmental program on Indian Lands and provide technical assistance from EPA to tribal governments in the development of multimedia programs to address environmental issues on Indian lands.
  - ▶ GAP funding can be useful in gaining understanding of the nature and extent of wetlands issues. It can be used for staff wetland training, for monitoring and assessment work, for establishing working relationships with others; and developing codes and ordinances for the protection of wetland resources.
  - ▶ GAP used for capacity development activities only.
  - ▶ <https://www.epa.gov/tribal/indian-environmental-general-assistance-program-gap>

# Other Funding Resources for your Wetlands Program

- ▶ Tribal 106 Program (Pollution Control Program)
  - ▶ Provides grants to states, territories, interstate agencies, tribes and intertribal consortia
  - ▶ To establish and implement water pollution control programs.
  - ▶ Grants can fund water quality monitoring; development of water quality standards; training and outreach for those purposes; permitting under the NPDES program; and inspection and enforcement activities.
  - ▶ Can be used for wetland monitoring and assessment, regulatory development and water quality standards development.
  - ▶ Can not be used for construction of wetlands; implementing BMPs or maintenance of BMPS.
  - ▶ In general, funding is not sufficient to address all tribal water program priorities.
  - ▶ <https://www.epa.gov/water-pollution-control-section-106-grants>

## Other Funding Resources for your Wetlands Program

- ▶ Nonpoint Source Management Program (Tribal 319 Program)
  - ▶ Provides grants to tribes and intertribal consortia as well as states, territories, and interstate agencies.
  - ▶ To establish and implement nonpoint source management programs.
  - ▶ Grants can fund development of watershed-based plans, implementation of water quality BMPs; staff salaries and training for those activities; outreach efforts, permitting, and inspections and enforcement.
  - ▶ Tribes can use these funds for a variety of activities to protect and restore wetlands that may be impacted by NPS pollution, including monitoring and assessment, regulation, restoration, etc.
  - ▶ Eligible tribes will receive \$30,000 in base funds annually. All other 319 funding is awarded competitively through a national process, and not all tribes will receive funding.
  - ▶ <https://www.epa.gov/nps/tribal-nonpoint-source-program>

# Other Funding Resources for your Wetlands Program

- ▶ Clean Water Indian Set-Aside (CWISA)
  - ▶ To improve water quality, achieve and maintain compliance with environmental laws, protect aquatic wildlife, protect and restore drinking water sources, and preserve the nation's waters for recreational use.
  - ▶ <https://www.epa.gov/small-and-rural-wastewater-systems/clean-water-indian-set-aside-program>
- ▶ DWSRF Tribal set-aside:
  - ▶ The DWSRF is a financial assistance program to help water systems achieve the health protection objectives of the SDWA. The program is a powerful partnership between EPA and the states. Congress appropriates funding for the DWSRF. EPA then awards capitalization grants to each state for their DWSRF based upon the results of the most recent Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment. The state provides a 20 percent match.
  - ▶ <https://www.epa.gov/tribaldrinkingwater/drinking-water-infrastructure-grants-tribal-set-aside-program>
- ▶ Both are state run programs, and you will need to coordinate with the state and EPA coordinators for each program.



# Other Funding Resources for your Wetlands Program

- ▶ Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Grant
  - ▶ The Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program focuses on the stewardship and restoration of coastal, wetland and riparian ecosystems across the country. Its goal is to meet the conservation needs of important species and habitats, providing measurable and meaningful conservation and educational outcomes. The program requires the establishment and/or enhancement of diverse partnerships and an education/outreach component that will help shape and sustain behavior to achieve conservation goals.
  - ▶ Funding priorities for this program include:
    - ▶ On-the-ground wetland, riparian, in-stream and/or coastal habitat restoration
    - ▶ Meaningful education and training activities, either through community outreach, participation and/or integration with K-12 environmental curriculum
    - ▶ Measurable ecological, educational and community benefits
    - ▶ Partnerships: Five Star projects should engage a diverse group of community partners to achieve ecological and educational outcomes.
  - ▶ Projects are generally small \$20K-\$50K.
  - ▶ <https://www.nfwf.org/programs/five-star-and-urban-waters-restoration-grant-program>

# Funding by Core Element

## ► Monitoring and Assessment

# Tier	WPDG**	106	319	SRF	GAP	HWCG	5 STAR UW
T1: Obj 1, Action b <b>Monitoring Objectives:</b> Define wetlands monitoring objectives and goals which generate data that serve management decision needs.	X	X		X	X	X	X
T1: Obj 1, Action c <b>Monitoring Design:</b> Select and integrate multiple designs to meet the full range of decision needs.	X	X		X	X	X	X
T1: Obj 1, Action d <b>Monitoring Design – Wetland Condition:</b> Select a core set of indicators to represent wetland condition or a suite of functions	X	X		X	X	X	X
T1: Obj 2, Action b Monitor wetland resources as specified in strategy	X	X		X	X	X	X
T1: Obj 2, Action c Establish reference condition	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
T2: Obj 2, Action a Ensure the scientific validity of monitoring and laboratory activities	X	X		X	X	X	X
T2: Obj 2, Action d Track monitoring data in a system that is accessible, updated on a timely basis, and integrated with other state or tribal water quality data	X	X		X	X	X	X
T2: Obj 2, Action e Analyze monitoring data to evaluate wetlands extent and condition/function or to inform decision-making	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
T2: Obj 3, Action a Evaluate monitoring program to determine how well it is meeting a state/tribe's monitoring program objectives	X	X		X	X	X	X
T3: Obj 1, Action a <b>Monitoring Strategy</b> Identify program decisions and long-term environmental outcome(s) that will benefit from a wetlands monitoring and assessment program	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
T3: Obj 3, Action b Evaluate the environmental consequences of a federal or state/tribal action or group of actions; modify programs as needed based on M&A data	X		X	X	X	X	X
T3: Obj 3, Action c Improve the site-specific management of wetland resources.	X		X	X	X	X	X
T3: Obj 3, Action d Develop geographically-defined wetland protection, restoration, and management plans	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

\*\*Please review the WPDG eligible CEFs at <https://www.epa.gov/wetlands/wetland-program-development-grants-eligible-activities>

# Funding by Core Element

- ▶ Voluntary Restoration and Protection

(OW)

Table 3b: Voluntary Restoration and Protection CE

# Tier	WPDG	106	319	SRF	GAP	HWCG	5 STAR/UW
T1: Obj 1, Action a Establish or become an active partner in a state /tribal voluntary restoration and protection program	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
T1: Obj 1, Action b Collect and enhance wetland information as a foundation for restoration and protection actions, strategy or program	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
T1: Obj 2, Action a Increase wetland acreage through restoration (reestablishment)	X		X		X	X	X
T1: Obj 3, Action a Track restoration/protection projects over time using short term and long term benchmarks of success	X		X	X	X	X	X
T2: Obj 1, Action c Consolidate and provide guidance on state and tribal restoration and protection management techniques and success measures	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
T2: Obj 3, Action b Monitor restoration/protection sites to ensure that they are managed correctly, contribute to meeting water quality goals and ecological health	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
T3: Obj 2, Action c Establish and Institutionalize long term protection, through state/tribal support and assistance using mechanisms such as incentives, purchase of land title or easements to protect wetlands	X		X	X	X	X	X
T3: Obj 2, Action b Improve natural wetland conditions and functions through restoration (rehabilitation)	X		X		X	X	X
T2: Obj 3, Action c Modify restoration/protection techniques as needed	X		X		X	X	X



# Funding by Core Element

## ▶ Water Quality Standards for Wetlands

# Tier	WPDG	106	319	SRF	GAP	HWCG	5 STAR/UW
T1: Obj 1, Action a Adopt an appropriate definition of wetlands	X	X		X	X	X	X
T1: Obj 2, Action a Collect and analyze monitoring data and other information that will become basis of wetland water quality standards	X	X		X	X	X	X
T1: Obj 2, Action b Establish appropriate wetland-specific designated uses to be achieved and protected	X	X		X	X	X	X
T1: Obj 2, Action d Establish narrative criteria where numeric criteria cannot be established or to supplement numeric criteria that qualitatively describe the condition or suite of functions that must be achieved to support a designated use	X	X		X	X	X	X
T1: Obj 2, Action f Establish numeric criteria representing wetland specific values for chemical, physical, and biological parameters that may not be exceeded, must be exceeded, or some combination to protect or restore designated uses	X	X		X	X	X	X
T1: Obj 3, Action a Use water quality standards as basis for regulatory decisions	X	X		X	X	X	
T2: Obj 1, Action b Ensure the appropriate wetlands definition is included in Water Quality Standards	X	X		X	X	X	
T2: Obj 2, Action c Adopt appropriate wetland specific designated uses to be achieved and protected	X	X		X	X	X	
T2: Obj 2, Action e Adopt narrative criteria that qualitatively describe the condition or suite of functions that must be achieved to support a designated use	X	X		X	X	X	
T2: Obj 2, Action g Adopt numeric criteria representing wetland specific values for chemical, physical, and biological parameters that may not be exceeded, must be exceeded, or some combination to protect or restore designated uses	X	X		X	X	X	
T2: Obj 2, Action i Draft and finalize water quality standard regulations (*planning)	X	X	X*	X	X	X	
T3: Obj 2, Action h Better define state/tribal antidegradation policies for wetlands, requiring full protection of existing uses (functions and/or condition), maintenance of functions/condition in high quality wetlands, and a prohibition against lowering functions/conditions in outstanding national resource waters	X	X		X	X	X	
T3: Obj 3, Action b Use water quality standards as basis for evaluating restoration/protection projects and mitigation/compensation projects	X	X	X	X	X	X	
T3: Obj 3, Action c Incorporate water quality standards into monitoring and assessment program	X	X			X	X	

# Funding by Core Element

## ► Regulatory

Table 3d: Regulatory

# Tier	WPDG	106	319	SRF	GAP	HWCG	5 STAR/UW
T1: Obj 1, Action a Provide clear and comprehensive jurisdictional coverage of aquatic resources	X				X	X	
T1: Obj 2, Action b Develop and operate according to a clear and effective set of criteria for reviewing and responding to applications	X				X	X	
T1: Obj 2, Action c Actively review proposed impacts to waters of the state	X				X	X	
T1: Obj 2, Action g Track permit/certification program activity	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
T1: Obj 3, Action d Incorporate the watershed approach into the regulatory decision-making process	X				X	X	
T2: Obj 1, Action b Clearly identify a comprehensive scope of activities to be regulated	X				X	X	
T2: Obj 1, Action c Provide clear guidance to public on how to identify jurisdictional waters and activities	X				X	X	
T2: Obj 2, Action d Adopt and apply comprehensive project review criteria	X				X	X	
T2: Obj 2, Action e Coordinate among agencies, programs, and industry groups to reduce duplicative efforts by the programs and the regulated public	X				X	X	
T2: Obj 2, Action f Require effective mitigation for authorized impacts					X	X	
T2: Obj 2, Action h Track / Evaluate	X				X	X	
T2: Obj 3, Action a Monitor the implementation of permit/certification conditions	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
T2: Obj 3, Action e Perform public education and outreach about wetland protection, regulated waters and activities, and authorization process	X				X	X	
T3: Obj 1, Action d Evaluation: Periodic review of state/tribal program to ensure all potentially regulated activities are addressed, and take appropriate programmatic action	X				X	X	
T3: Obj 2, Action a Adopt regulations or rules to implement State/Tribal and/or federal water quality statutes	X				X	X	
T3: Obj 3, Action b Enforce aquatic resource protections	X				X	X	
T3: Obj 3, Action c Ensure impact assessments and mitigation crediting lead to replacement of aquatic resources with similar structural, functional or condition attributes	X				X	X	
T3: Obj 3, Action f Measure Environmental Results	X				X	X	



# Other Funding Resources for your Wetlands Program

- ▶ **Agricultural Conservation Easement Program**
  - ▶ [Agricultural Conservation Easement Funding](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/easements/acep/)  
(<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/easements/acep/>)
- ▶ **Chesapeake Bay Program**
  - ▶ [Chesapeake Bay Grants Program](https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/grants)  
(<https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/grants>)
- ▶ **Great Lakes Program Funding**
  - ▶ [Great Lakes Program](https://www.epa.gov/great-lakes-funding) (<https://www.epa.gov/great-lakes-funding>)
- ▶ **National Estuary Program**
  - ▶ [National Estuary Program - local program opportunities](https://www.epa.gov/nep/local-estuary-programs)  
(<https://www.epa.gov/nep/local-estuary-programs>) **Community-Based Restoration Program Funding**
- ▶ **[Community-based Restoration Program](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/grant/coastal-and-marine-habitat-restoration-grants)**  
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/grant/coastal-and-marine-habitat-restoration-grants>)
- ▶ **Flood Mitigation Assistance Program Funding**
  - ▶ [Flood Mitigation Assistance Program](https://www.fema.gov/flood-mitigation-assistance-grant-program) (<https://www.fema.gov/flood-mitigation-assistance-grant-program>)
- ▶ **North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grants Program**
  - ▶ [North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grants Program](https://www.fws.gov/birds/grants/north-american-wetland-conservation-act.php)  
(<https://www.fws.gov/birds/grants/north-american-wetland-conservation-act.php>)

# Other Funding Resources for your Wetlands Program

- ▶ The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
  - ▶ Established to provide a voluntary conservation program for agricultural producers to address significant natural resource needs and objectives.
  - ▶ [https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/financial/eqip/?cid=nrcs142p2\\_015524](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/financial/eqip/?cid=nrcs142p2_015524)
  
- ▶ Conservation Stewardship Program
  - ▶ <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/csp/>
  
- ▶ Watershed and Flood Prevention Program
  - ▶ [Watershed and Flood Prevention Program and Resources](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/landscape/wfpo/?cid=nrcs143_008271)  
([https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/landscape/wfpo/?cid=nrcs143\\_008271](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/landscape/wfpo/?cid=nrcs143_008271))
  - ▶ This program provides for cooperation between the Federal government and the states and their political subdivisions to work together to prevent erosion; floodwater and sediment damage; to further the conservation development, use and disposal of water; and to further the conservation and proper use of land in authorized watersheds.

# EPA and Other Federal Grants that Include Wetlands Restoration

In addition to the list on the Wetlands Funding page, below are some additional sources of potential federal funding for wetlands restoration.

(<https://www.epa.gov/wetlands/epa-and-other-federal-grants-include-wetlands-restoration>)

- ▶ Federal Emergency Management Agency
  - ▶ Flood Mitigation Assistance Program
- ▶ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
  - ▶ Coastal Zone Management Funding
  - ▶ Community-based Restoration Program
- ▶ U. S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
  - ▶ Agricultural Conservation Easement Funding
  - ▶ Watershed and Flood Prevention Program and Resources
- ▶ U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
  - ▶ National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program
  - ▶ North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grants Program

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